

000 their remote villages, the Bush Negroes do as they please.

648 The punitive powers of the white government are seldom
682 exercised. Occasionally in Djuka land, as elsewhere, a murder occurs over some woman. Once or twice the Dutch have made an effort to arrest the criminal. But on the whole police jurisdiction is impossible, as any person familiar with the impenetrable bush and impassable rivers will easily realize. What occurs in any but the nearby villages is largely unknown.

Once the white authorities were cognizant of a murder that took place in Biodoti, one of Jankoeso's villages, and demanded the murderer for trial. With more sympathy for their own people who are criminals than for the white people who are judges, the Djukas flatly refused to give the man up. The Dutch colonial troops threw a cordon across the river just below Biodoti, refusing thoroughfare to any Bush Negro corials; this blockade would be enforced, they said, until the murderer was handed over. During the night Djuka corials leaked past the cordon; it was difficult to stop them. The Governor sent word to Jankoeso to come down to Paramaribo for an extraordinary parley. His refusal was [202] brought by his personal messengers, his *lamba*, who are specially trained from childhood to carry long messages in their heads, keeping every word intact. The Governor informed these *lamba* that unless Jankoeso came willingly a detachment of troops would be sent to get him down by force.

Indignantly the Granman came, referring to himself as

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97

a prisoner, and refusing to take the special train awaiting him at Kabel. Special trains, he said, were not for prisoners. He was paddled the additional ninety miles in his own corial, which took six days longer. Very vexed at this, the Governor did not shake hands with him, and Jankoeso was offended. "Why doesn't he tell me 'Howdy'?" he asked Mynheer Wolff, who is always instrumental in furthering friendly relations between Dutch and Djukas. Wolff called the Governor outside, and advised him to treat the Granman with more cordiality. The necessary handshaking was done, and the parley continued more affably. The guilty one was apprehended and jailed for a year. Once again there went upstream the annual present of the Dutch government to each Granman. This is a continuation of the custom of tribute money paid to the Bush Negroes ever since the days of the black rebellions. Every year each Granman receives 1500 guilders.

The Granman is the actual chief of the river nation, but the government centres in the village proper. The village is governed by a headman or *captain*, and aiding him in his work is a council or *bosseia*, consisting of three or four or more of the most mature men and women of the town. "Bosseia," like the American colloquial *boss*, comes from the Dutch word *baas*. Here the rough justice of the jungle is administered, and local disputes are settled. Here decisions are made concerning the ownership of timber, and property rights in cassava fields. Quarrels over women are more frequent than any other kind of disputes, and they, too, are settled by the village captain and his *bosseia*.

/7 cont./

- 101 4th. Bonnie /Boni/ Negroes, living on the river above Marowyné;
 [175] until 1862 they were in a state of slavery among the
 [567] Aucaners, but at that time, through the intervention of
 the government, they were released from it. Their name
 is supposed to be derived from a former runaway slave who
 had placed himself at their head.

Chapter III

Government, Laws, Administration of Justice

- 643 Each of these tribes, except for the Bonnie Negroes, has
 [292] a chief whom they call granman (governor); the uniform given
 to him by the government is a blue tunic with epaulets and a
 cocked hat with white plush.

Among the Aucaners the chief is called Byman, a cunning,
 courageous, and prudent man, around 63 years old.

The chief of the Saramaccaners is called Abram, an infirm
 old man who is very weak of character and has little influence.

The Mantoewari Negroes have a chief called Kalkoen, who,
 although aged and infirm, can nonetheless still be called firm of
 character.

- 631 /8/ Under their chief they have a certain number of captains
 and council members. The former are divided into bush captains,
 who take command in case of war, and into house or land cap-
 [554] tains, who deal with internal matters with the chief. The token
 of their prestige given to them by the government consists of a
 large staff with a round silver ball (drum-major's stick), on which
 is the Netherlands coat of arms with "Je maintiendrai."

- 344 They have a large open shed which serves them as court
 and which they call kroetoehoso (probably derived from the English
 "courthouse").

- 682 Their legislation is very limited. One who kills another
 is punished with death; one who poisons someone suffers death by
 torture, provided that substantial irrefutable proof exists. (See
 Chapter XI below.) If the death penalty is not appropriate, the

682 /8 cont. /
[672] culprit is condemned to find the requital in his offspring. His
[567] children, children's children, and great-grandchildren must render
slave services for the family of the person poisoned.

692 Moreover, they usually act in accordance with the judgment
and the decision of their elders or council members. Most punish-
681 ments consist of whip lashes.

Chapter IV

Weapons

411 These consist of rifles, machetes, bow and arrow, and lances.
278 In some cases they also use a kind of cudgel (1). The most dangerous
682

1. An Indian weapon called apoetoe.

one that they possess, however, is an assortment of vegetable poisons with which they can secretly strike their enemies and whose effects manifest themselves slowly, but are usually lethal. They not only mix these with one food or another, or in snuff or tobacco, but in the case of some can merely bring them in contact with a part of the body and thereby produce to the most infectious results.

/9/

Chapter V

Dwellings, Practices, Customs, Housekeeping

342 Their huts are constructed low above the ground from un-
824 worked round wood, covered with pina, the leaves of a palm
species (1), and surrounded by palisade pales.

1. Euterpe oleracea Mart.

352 The couches and sleeping places within are also made of
paling.

354 Inside the hut is found the hearth or place for the fire, on
372 which they cook and in which they constantly maintain a fire for

/14 cont./

584 and, once this has been promised, she does indeed continue to be regarded specifically as the betrothed of the person who made the request. As soon as she is marriageable, she is handed over to her man with or without her consent, and it may be regarded as a rare case when such a promise is broken.

[431] The man to whom she is promised sometimes does not see his future wife before the occasion of her betrothal, but usually he is concerned with her upbringing and from time to time gives her presents consisting of money, pantjes, and corals.

[591] Some take the girl promised to them even when she is only three or four years old in order to rear her further.

[672] The promising of newborn girls takes place for the most part

• [682] when there are obligations between parents, as was reported in Chapter III, and in the case of enslavement which is done to one

[567] family by another in case of poisoning, and so forth.

586 It is an everyday occurrence that a woman leaves her husband or a man his wife for another.

595 Polygyny is much practiced, and among my workers I know several who have three or four wives, most of whom are very young. Some, however, have only one wife.

[513] It is noteworthy that all the wives sleep with the man in one hut, while in addition he perhaps keeps with him a girl whom he is bringing up to be his wife. One wife will be /15/ with him in the hammock and lies with her feet at the head end of the man and the latter in turn with his feet at the head end of the women, while the other women sleep in their hammocks.

[484] If a Bush Negro goes out, be it to celebrate a festival or in order to float wood to the town, he takes all his wives with him; only in case of illness do they remain behind.

His wives get money separately, and therefore they must also separately provide for his food, so that one cooks the food in the morning, another at midday, a third in the evening, etc.

[578] This way of life and their jealous nature frequently bring about household quarrels that rarely end in any way other than bloody fights.

585 Upon the conclusion of a marriage the man is obligated to
583 give the parents of the girl as a marriage portion a long, broad,

/18 cont. /

766 times, no noticeable movement has been observed, the answer is
787 negative, and one proceeds with the corpse all the way to the
end of the crowd ranged on either side. Everyone endeavors to
be present on such occasions in order not to cast any blame upon
himself or to arouse suspicion.

If, however, the answer is in the affirmative, then one asks
whether the right person or a close relative of his is here; if the
answer to this is also affirmative, one proceeds to inquire about
the degree of blood relationship until one has finally discovered who
the actual person is. Since this happens in the presence of so
many persons as witnesses, it is regarded as valid proof, and the
corpse is buried. However incomprehensible and impossible this
may appear, this procedure is nonetheless actually practiced con-
stantly among the Bush Negroes. I have been an eyewitness
several times.

695 A few days later the person indicated, in case he was not
[693] present at the above-mentioned inquiry, is tracked down, if
necessary fetched forcibly, and brought before the governor or the
chief, who questions him in the presence of the captains or the
council members. In case of denial, he is offered something to
drink, which, however, he will not accept if he is guilty, since
it has become apparent that whoever drinks it with a pounding or
uneasy heart frequently manifests immediate symptoms, such as
[681] vomiting, swelling, chlorosis, and so forth. If the person has
been prepared to brave this (in spite of the conviction of his mis-
deed), he is put to death by means of the most horrible and unheard-of
tortures, whereas in the case of confession he is forced with the
whip to reveal whom else he has poisoned during his life.

696 All the relatives of the poisoned person are then called in
682 order to be present at the punishment and to pull on his ears
with all possible force by means of a pair of pincers, one after
[262] another. Subsequently a bowl with pinda blaf is set before him,
in which a turtle must be boiled, as well as a tomtom made of ripe
bananas. All this, after all, is regarded as the tastiest food. He
is then /19/ again severely beaten with a whip, whereupon he must
eat what has been prepared for him, and immediately afterwards

/19 cont. /

- 696 he must sit unbound on a large fire arranged in gridiron fashion,
 • 682 so that he burns completely to ashes.

[695] Never, however, is an accused put to death before three months have elapsed after the inquiry, because there still might possibly be a chance that his innocence will be proved.

- 682 In the case of a confession and the supplying of clear proof
 [695] that the deceased gave cause to be poisoned, the culprit frequently
 [672] escapes with a light punishment; sometimes also forgiveness is granted with general approval, with the condition that the culprit take upon himself to the third generation the obligation to be of service in everything to the descendants of the maltreated person.
 681 It may also happen that in the case of various other misdeeds the
 672 perpetrator is completely forgiven for his misdeed, but that upon his descendants to the third generation there is imposed the obligation to render slave services exactly as in the case of poisoning.

681 The majority of these slave services ordinarily consist of giving money, strong drink, or the necessities of life, as a result of which hard work must often be done in order to be able to fulfill them. Every day they are afraid that this or that may be exacted from them. There are indications, however, that not too great a misuse is made of this.

765 Twelve months after the burial there always takes place a great gathering in the hut of the deceased, at which time the period of mourning ends with rejoicing. Exuberant festivities are then celebrated, and that night an unusually great amount is drunk, eaten, and honor salutes fired. Everyone in the vicinity, insofar as he is able, is present on this occasion.

This festival is called tesa, the ending of the mourning period, and begins after one of the nearest relatives, who enjoys the greatest respect, takes a large calabash filled with water in his right hand and with it slowly walks forth out of the hut along the other dwellings nearby and is followed by a large number of people, during which he here and there sprinkles the water,
 [775] trówęwatra, in drops on the ground, saying: Like this water, the soul of the deceased will also be pure, and all that was dear to him will remain tranquilly on earth without being disturbed by him who as spirit finds himself in the spirit world.